

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System
Doctoral Internship in Psychology

2014-2015



For additional information not included in this brochure, please visit:
www.biloxi.va.gov/services/Psychology/AboutUs.asp

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Our Vision

The Psychology Internship training program embraces the philosophy that the pre-doctoral internship year represents a transition period for the emerging professional psychologist during which the Intern moves from the role of graduate student to that of the autonomous professional. Training and supervision during the year should prepare the Intern to enter the field of professional psychology with those skills needed to function independently and with the confidence and professional self-awareness to make maximum use of the individual's talents. Therefore, our training goal is to develop generalists who can function in a broad range of professional settings using a variety of skills. Reciprocally, our training program stimulates and enriches the training faculty and enhances the quality of patient care.

The internship program emphasizes the development of extensive proficiencies in various facets of psychology (i.e., personality, intellectual, neuropsychological and psychodiagnostic assessment, psychotherapy, scholarly inquiry, research competence, consultation) with diverse patient populations. However, the training year provides time to develop professionally and to set the stage for further post-doctoral specialization in the areas of primary care psychology, health psychology/behavioral medicine, neuropsychology, geropsychology, posttraumatic stress disorders, and women's mental health. To enhance the diversity of the training experience, the faculty encourages applications from individuals with a variety of competencies and interests. The program facilitates professional development of Interns by increasing their sensitivity to the cultural and individual diversity of the patients we serve and the professionals with whom we work. Significant attention is given to encouraging Interns' personal, professional, and ethical development, consistent with the demands of becoming a psychologist.

Our Goals

The primary goal of the program is to train future independent licensed practitioners whose clinical decisions are informed by the integration of science and professional practice of psychology, in keeping with a Scholar-Practitioner Model. Significant attention is given to encouraging the intern's personal, professional and ethical development, consistent with the developmental needs of becoming a professional psychologist. Attention is also given to intern training needs, long term professional goals, and anticipated public health needs. Our specific goals for interns include:

Growth in Knowledge

We focus our clinical training and didactics on preparing a rich professional practitioner knowledge base. The internship is designed to provide a broad range of training experiences in the contemporary practice of professional psychology with some opportunity for subspecialty training and to satisfy licensure requirements for most states in the U.S.

Sensitivity to Cultural and Individual Diversity

We strive to provide the interns diverse and wide ranging clinical training experiences with an appreciation of multicultural/diversity sensitivity. The program facilitates professional development of interns by increasing their sensitivity to the cultural and individual diversity of the patients we serve and the professionals with whom we work. To enhance the diversity of the training experience, the faculty encourages applications from individuals with a variety of competencies and interests, as well as applicants from diverse backgrounds.

Appreciation of Professional Diversity

The program is designed so that interns have interactions with and supervision by several of the training faculty. This provides for a broad range of experiences with professional psychologists who have diverse racial, gender, academic, theoretical, practice, and specialty backgrounds. Further, many of our training opportunities incorporate an interprofessional approach to treatment, allowing interaction with an interdisciplinary team.

Generalized Competence

The internship program emphasizes and develops a broad range of skills (i.e., personality, cognitive, neuropsychological and psychodiagnostic assessment, psychotherapy, scholarly inquiry, research competence, consultation) with diverse patient populations.

Preparing for Future Professional Roles

The training year provides time to develop professionally and to set the stage for further post-doctoral specialization in the areas of health psychology/behavioral medicine, neuropsychology, geropsychology, posttraumatic stress disorders, and women's mental health. Interns will be prepared to assume clinical and research focused professional health care positions wherein they will provide empirically based interventions and likewise contribute to the professional knowledge base.

Our Model

In keeping with our goals, all internship training is designed to be sequential, cumulative, and graded in complexity as the year progresses to meet both the needs of the interns and community at large.

Rotations

Each intern completes four, three-month rotations of approximately 3 ½ days per week. The Inpatient Psychiatry Rotation and some experience in an outpatient setting are currently required rotations. Inpatient Psychiatry can be waived by the Director of Training if the intern has substantial prior experience and training in that arena. Split rotations are possible, again with the prior approval of the supervisors involved and the Director of Training. Rotation offerings may vary depending on supervisory availability.

Long Term Projects

The long-term project gives each intern the opportunity to design and pursue a specialized training experience in which he or she will participate throughout the entire training year. The long-term project may be clinically oriented, may focus on program development, may involve another facet of service provision (e.g., outreach, prevention, etc.), or may involve research. One half day per week is devoted to the long term project.

Dissertation Support

Although interns will be very busy with their clinical work, the training faculty encourages them to organize their professional activities, whether on-duty or off-duty, so that progress

continues on the dissertation. While support in completing the dissertation is available on a limited basis, it is presumed that interns have proposed their projects, collected data, and are in the final stages of analysis and write-up when they begin their internship year. Some dissertation topics, however, require samples that can only be obtained in settings like our health care system. In the past, some interns have utilized our Veteran population to collect dissertation data. This arrangement, though, is not guaranteed to be available and would require extensive preparation in reference to IRB and the GCVHCS Research and Development Office requirements prior to initiation of the internship or very soon after initiation of the internship. We prefer that interns complete their dissertations during the training year, and then focus intensely on licensure and obtaining postdoctoral employment.

Additional Training

Each Thursday is devoted to training seminars, group supervision, or other meetings (monthly staff meeting, CE programs, Grand Rounds presentations, Training Supervisors Meeting). Other training activities include conducting cognitive and personality assessments, serving a term as Chief Intern, and developing and implementing work stress/anger management programs for medical center employees.

Supervision and Evaluation

Supervision is an integral part of the training program and is designed to foster education, professional competence, personal and professional growth, ethical responsibility, and personal integrity. At the beginning of the internship year, the Director of Training reviews the goals of supervision, process of supervision, and characteristics of good supervisors and supervisees. Outlines of this information are provided for each intern to reference during the training year. Supervisors are licensed psychologists who share their knowledge and expertise, model technique and professional behavior, and encourage interns to develop their skills using a variety of assessment/diagnostic, intervention, treatment team consultation, and research methods. Interns are expected to apply critical thinking and contemporary, empirically-based skills to professional, legal, and ethical issues related to the practice of psychology. Interns receive a minimum 4 hours of supervision per week, at least two of which are individual supervision. The remaining supervision hours occur through extra individual or group supervision, including the Professional Development/Group Supervision Seminar. Additional supervision may likely occur through other scheduled or unscheduled and formal or informal supervision contacts and sessions.

Specific rotation/activity goals and objectives are communicated to interns in writing at the onset of each rotation/activity. Faculty supervisors meet monthly to discuss the progress of interns toward meeting these goals and objectives. At mid-rotation, supervisors and interns are prompted to exchange feedback on the rotation experience and review goals/objectives. Patient and hospital staff feedback are reviewed and integrated into the evaluation of intern progress. At the end of each rotation, interns and their primary supervisors complete formal, written competency evaluations that are forwarded to the Director of Training. The information in these evaluations is used by the DOT to provide ongoing feedback to interns, supervisors, and academic training directors. Typically, evaluation letters are sent to the interns' academic programs at midyear and at the completion of the internship. Successful completion of relevant rotations, seminars, and general activity objectives constitute exit criteria for completion of the program.

Problem Issues and Due Process Resolution

Normally, problematic behavior or less than satisfactory performance is resolved by the intern and the rotation supervisor. In rare instances, formal remediation is necessary. We have a written due process document which details policies and procedures that are implemented in these cases. These procedures for handling grievances are designed to protect the rights of the student, the supervisor and the training program. You may obtain a copy of this document by sending an e-mail request to Dr. Fussell at shannon.fussell@va.gov.

Required Hours and Holidays

There are 10 Federal Holidays throughout the year and interns accrue 13 days each of Annual Leave and Sick Leave as Federal Employees. In order to certify the 2000 hour-year requirement of most states and account for time off on holidays and use of Leave, interns are required to obtain and document an average of 40-50 hours of work per week.

A Research Facility

The Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System is accredited as a research facility by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP). In our efforts to provide quality and cutting edge care to Veterans, this facility encourages all disciplines to pursue research endeavors. Some training faculty members actively pursue their own research programs, which may translate to opportunities for interns to participate in research.

Our Information Resources

The Department of Veterans Affairs has been a leader in the development of the computerized medical record. The VA's Computerized Patient Records System (CPRS) is currently the most sophisticated system in use. Interns will utilize CPRS for chart review of progress notes, consults, radiological reports, health care summaries, discharge summaries, pharmaceutical information, etc. All employees and interns have accounts on the health care system computer network (VISTA – a VA internal intranet system), general internet access, and an e-mail address. Computers are available in all psychology stations (including intern offices). The vast majority of health care system communications are conducted via computer. Behavioral Health Service led the way in transitioning the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System to the computerized medical record. The Information Management Service-Information Center staff support the clinical, educational, and research activities of the health care system by providing knowledge-based resources in electronic and print formats. The Electronic Library webpage provides a core collection of traditional text resources (book titles, subscriptions, and audiovisual materials and equipment) and an extensive collection of electronic resources. Interlibrary Loan service and assisted computerized literature searches are available. Satellite teleconferencing (i.e., V-Tel) allows live training by, and real-time interactions with, national and international experts.

SEMINARS

Neuropsychology Seminar

The Neuropsychology Seminar, which meets weekly for the entire year, consists of presentations designed to provide basic education about Neuropsychology, including information about the various domains and disorders that are assessed, basic neuroanatomy, test administration, and report writing. It includes training in the use of standardized tests such as the Neuropsychological Assessment Battery, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV, and Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System. It is useful for individuals preparing to take the EPPP who have had no coursework in Neuropsychology, and it serves as a review for those who have. Discussion of the various domains and disorders are supplemented with case presentations pertinent to the topic being discussed.

Diagnostics and Psychopathology Seminar

The Diagnostics and Psychopathology Seminar is designed to help interns become more proficient in relating psychopathological signs and symptoms to diagnostic criteria. In addition to a thorough review of the DSM-5 diagnostic nomenclature, case examples are presented and discussed. This seminar also provides an opportunity to examine unusual and problematic cases that present in various settings that interns may rotate through during the training year.

Professional Development Seminar

Psychological Assessment Seminar

The Psychological Assessment Seminar meets weekly for the entire year. The goal of the assessment seminar is to help the intern acquire the skills necessary to select, administer, score and interpret a battery of diagnostic psychological tests. In addition to training in the use of objective and projective assessment instruments, the intern will learn to conduct and document the results of a mental status examination. Relevant concepts will be richly illustrated through the use of case history materials gathered from past and present medical center patients. The seminar also includes instruction in the preparation of the psychological testing report, a review of current literature related to assessment, and discussions of cultural and ethical considerations. Interns are encouraged to bring test data to the seminar for discussion.

Empirically-Based Treatments (EBT) and Special Topics in Psychology Seminar

The Empirically-Based Treatments (EBT) and Special Topics in Psychology Seminar meets twice per month. The coordinator of this seminar arranges for didactic presentations by training faculty and adjunct faculty consisting of VA and community experts in a variety of content areas. Approximately 50% of the seminar meetings are dedicated to education in EBTs by EBT-trained staff members. The remainder of the seminar schedule offers interns the opportunity to address a variety of topics pertinent to professional practice. Examples include: caring for Veterans, advanced trauma therapies, diversity issues, death and dying, disaster mental health, and psychopharmacology. In addition, interns may present treatment cases, as well as contemporary treatment methods and special techniques with which they are familiar.

Diversity Roundtable Seminar

The Diversity Roundtable Seminar meets every month and is an opportunity for interns and training faculty to examine issues related to working with diverse populations. Presentations are offered by expert practitioners and researchers employed in a variety of settings throughout the nation. Seminars are offered via V-Tel from remote sites. Presentations are usually followed by group discussion. Recent topics have included spirituality in combat, the role of acculturation in psychotherapy outcomes, and psychotherapy with American Indian populations

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES DURING THE INTERNSHIP YEAR

Group Supervision **[View Syllabus](#)**

Group Supervision meets on a weekly basis, supervised by the Director and Assistant Director of Training. Interns discuss current cases and elicit feedback from their supervisors and peers. Each intern is called upon to present a case conceptualization from his/her theoretical orientation and also an orientation divergent from his/her training. Additionally, there is review and discussion of recent journal article publications on the practice of psychology and of material relevant to the EPPP. The seminar typically addresses additional issues of professional development including applying for licensure, job seeking, ethical considerations, etc.

Psychology Grand Rounds

Psychology Grand Rounds programs are held monthly. Interns, on a rotating basis, present two cases over the course of the year that illustrate a particular diagnostic or therapeutic problem. Faculty, interns and other students attend and participate. Interns must present assessment data, review contemporary literature related to the disorder, and lead discussion concerning the diagnosis and treatment of the case. Attention is given to diversity in patients and populations presented. Toward the end of the year, with permission of the Director of Training, an intern may elect to present his or her current VA research or dissertation project.

Assessment Training Program

The Assessment Training Program provides services to the Biloxi center and to the Mobile and Pensacola Outpatient Clinics. Consultation requests are received from a wide range of sources: Neurology, Medicine, Primary Care, Psychiatry, Extended Care, and even Employee Health. After learning to properly administer the assessment measures, Interns are assigned full psychological assessment reports throughout the year, with a minimum of 4 cognitive and 4 personality reports required. This training experience is supported through the weekly Neuropsychology Seminar, Assessment Seminar, and individual and group supervision.

Role of Chief Intern

The Chief Intern is appointed by the Director of Training (DOT) on a rotating schedule from among the intern class. The primary job of the Chief Intern is to represent the intern class to the Director of Training and to assist, as needed, with some of the duties relevant to the psychology training program. Among the varied duties, Chief Interns typically are integral in the role of assisting the DOT in developing a workable rotation schedule for the interns during the training year. They attend, as a representative and liaison for the intern class, the monthly Intern Supervisor's Meeting and the monthly steering committee meeting. It is not uncommon for the Chief Intern to provide a listing of intern's telephone extensions, pager numbers, office

numbers and routing symbols (a “locator list”) at the beginning of each rotation and distribute Rotation Evaluation forms during the last week of the rotation for completion by interns and faculty.

The Chief Intern will assist with coordination of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services within Gulf Coast VA. He or she will be provided with an EAP cell phone, which will be answered during regular business hours. Gulf Coast VA employees will have access to the EAP cell phone number to request services. The Behavioral Health Service secretary and other administrative staff may also contact the EAP cell phone to request assistance in coordinating EAP services. Chief Interns coordinate additional DOT or Chief administrative requests as needed. These varied duties are consistent with the overarching goals of the training program and needs of the Behavioral Health Service.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Behavioral Health Service has been at the forefront in providing psychological assistance for employees of the Health Care System. The goal of this program is to help employees deal with stressors in their work setting or away from work that interfere with their ability to perform their work satisfactorily. This can range from dealing with major stressors, such as the aftermath of hurricane devastation, to marital difficulties or interpersonal conflicts on the job. This program is not a true rotation experience. Interns are called upon to conduct or help in clinical activities, such as brief and focused psychological treatment for employees seeking the services of the Employee Assistance Program or facilitating stress and anger management workshops for particular staff teams

Continuing Professional Education Series

The Continuing Education Program Series meets as arranged, though often on the first Thursday of the month. The Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System is the only agency on the Gulf Coast, and the first agency in the state, certified by the Mississippi Board of Psychology to provide continuing education for the psychologist license renewal. Training includes lectures by members of the Training Faculty, community experts, guest lecturers, and occasionally APA-approved CE video presentations and satellite teleconferences.

INTERNSHIP TRAINING FACULTY

Nathaniel Abston, Jr., Ph.D., Mental Health Clinic Psychologist

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System

License: Mississippi, 1984-Present

Alabama, 1997-Present

Duties: Dr. Abston serves as a Clinical Psychologist in the Mental Health Clinic, at the Mobile, Alabama VA Outpatient Clinic (MOPC). He provides a wide range of psychological services including assessment, consultation, individual and group psychotherapy to Veterans with PTSD, Depression and Severe Mental Disorders. He also provides EAP Services to MOPC Staff and serves on the Psychology Service Peer Review Committee.

Professional: Dr. Abston's clinical and research interest include: the treatment of PTSD, Depression and Severe Mental Illness, Stress Management, Multicultural Issues in Psychology and the use of Family Therapy and Spirituality in Psychotherapy. His theoretical orientation is eclectic with an emphasis on Cognitive-Behavioral and Interpersonal Therapy Interventions. He is Lecturer at the University of South Alabama, where he teaches courses in African-American Psychology and Abnormal Psychology.

Personal: Dr. Abston is an avid Jazz and Sports fan. He enjoys fishing, gardening, reading and attending local and regional Jazz and Blues Concerts and College and Professional Sporting Events.

Ronald W. Alexander, Ph.D.

Titles(s): Clinical Health Psychologist

School: University of Alabama, Birmingham

Internship: Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX

Post-doctoral Fellowship: Clinical Health Psychology, Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX

License: Kansas, 1999 – Present

Duties: Dr. Alexander is responsible for providing a full spectrum of health psychology/ behavioral medicine services within the medical center. He is currently involved with the Health Psychology/Behavioral Medicine Clinic, MH Integrated Primary Care, Pain Clinic, MOVE! Program and the Traumatic Brain Injury/Polytrauma screening program.

Professional: Dr. Alexander's theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive/behavioral with an emphasis on comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment and treatment. He is an avid supporter of the integration of mental health professionals into primary care clinics, with strong emphasis on the behavioral health consultant (BHC) model of care. He has special interest in the proper referral, and comprehensive assessment and treatment of veterans returning from the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Other clinical and research interventions on quality of life and the overall reduction of health care costs. He is in the process of obtaining ABPP certification in Clinical Health Psychology.

Kellee R. Bivens, Ph.D.

Titles(s): Gulf Coast Health Behavior Coordinator

School: University of Alabama

Internship: University of Alabama at Birmingham/Birmingham VAMC

License: Alabama, 2009 – Present

Duties: As Health Behavior Coordinator (HBC) for VA Gulf Coast, Dr. Bivens participates in the training of staff in health coaching and motivational interviewing. As HBC, she serves as co-chair of the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Committee. She currently is involved in facilitation of the MOVE! Weight Management Program and Smoking Cessation Program at the Joint Ambulatory Care Center (JACC) – Pensacola Outpatient Clinic.

Professional: Clinical and research interests include chronic pain, health behavior change, behavioral sleep medicine, acceptance and commitment therapy, and motivational interviewing. Her theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive behavioral.

Personal: Interests include reading, going to the movies or watching DVDs, spending time with her beagle, Logan, and watching Alabama Football.

Kara V. Boyer, Ph.D.

Title: Assistant Clinical Coordinator-Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program;
Assistant Director of Postdoctoral Training

School: The University of South Dakota

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System

License: Mississippi, 2011 – Present

Duties: Dr. Boyer is the Assistant Clinical Coordinator of the Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program. Her duties in this role include assisting in the day to day management of the program, especially with regard to the psychotherapeutic offerings and program evaluation.

Professional Interests: Dr. Boyer's professional interests include Rural Mental Health, issues related to aging and the phenomenology of PTSD. Her interests also include the practice of Evidenced-Based therapies, including cognitive behavioral, cognitive processing and dialectical behavioral therapies. Her theoretical orientation is cognitive-behavioral.

Personal Interests: Her personal interests include spending time with her family. She loves crafts and spends more time in Hobby Lobby than is probably healthy. She also enjoys SEC football and waits all winter, spring and summer to see her team play between the hedges.

Avery R. Buras, Ph.D.

Title: Psychologist – Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP)

School: Texas A&M University

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System

License: Louisiana, 2004- present 16

Duties: Dr. Buras is the psychologist for the SAIOP. His duties in this role include: completing intake psychological evaluations/assessments of Veterans admitted to this program, conducting lecture and process group therapy, working with Veterans on an individual basis and playing an active role on the SARRTP interdisciplinary treatment team. Group therapy includes groups in Mood Management; Handling Guilt, Shame and Anger; the link between the biology of addiction and need for behavioral change for treatment; Substance Abuse Education, Relaxation Training and 12-Step Work. Dr. Buras also teaches seminars on the assessment of and case conceptualization of alcohol and drug addiction.

Professional Interests: Dr. Buras' professional interests include the treatment of addiction, developmental disabilities, behavioral medicine/health psychology, adult and adolescent development, and abnormal psychology. His theoretical orientation is cognitive-behavioral with an emphasis on behavioral interventions, especially with those early in recovery.

Personal Interests: His personal interests include: following his son around as he plays, traveling baseball, biking, fishing, listening to live music, and anything New Orleans.

Scott A. Cardin, Ph.D.

Titles(s): Director of Postdoctoral Training; Lead Tele-health Psychologist

School: Texas A&M University

Internship: University Houston Counseling and Psychological Service

Post-doc: Michael E. DeBakey VAMC, Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC)

License: Mississippi, 2008 – Present

Duties: Director of Postdoctoral Training; Director of Postgraduate Interprofessional Training

Professional: Dr. Cardin's primary clinical interests include rural mental health, supervision/training, psychotherapy process, group therapy, mindfulness, and language factors. His theoretical orientation is eclectic with an emphasis on psychodynamic therapy. He is one of the supervisors for the telehealth rotation, but also provides group psychotherapy in the outpatient mental health clinic, including overseeing a DBT clinic and facilitating interpersonal process groups. Prior to joining our VA, he completed a two-year MIRECC Postdoctoral Fellowship in Advanced Psychology with an emphasis in research. His research efforts since joining the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System have revolved around rural mental health and locally significant clinical populations. Specifically, he is interested in examining psychotherapy utilization and implementation studies examining ways to improve access to care. Dr. Cardin serves on the Executive Council of the Mississippi Psychological Association as their organization's Rural Health Coordinator. He also is a Past Chair of the Department of Veterans Affairs Psychology Training Council's (VAPTC) Rural and Small Training Program Workgroup.

Personal: Dr. Cardin enjoys reading, creative writing, recreational sports (such as basketball, golf, and disc golf), and exploring the Gulf Coast.

Michael A. Carlton, Ph.D.

Title(s): Home Based Primary Care Psychologist (HBPC)

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System,

License: Alabama, 2000 – present

Duties: Dr. Carlton is responsible for providing psychological services to veterans enrolled in the Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) program. These services include assessing cognitive disorders, performing decisional capacity (health and financial) evaluations, and participating as a member of the HBPC interdisciplinary treatment team. He also supervises interns on the HBPC rotation.

Professional: Dr. Carlton's professional interests include health psychology, traumatic stress, and examining the use of audio-visual aids and bio-feedback to enhance therapeutic outcomes. His theoretical orientation is cognitive-behavioral and eclectic.

Personal: His personal interests include playing guitar, sitting in on jam sessions, listening to a variety of music, fishing, and spending time with family.

Jack C. Carney, Ph.D.

Title(s): Assistant Chief, Psychology

School: Tennessee State University

Internship: James H. Quillen VA Medical Center

License: Alabama, 2006 – Present

Duties: Dr. Carney is the Assistant Chief, Psychology Service. He is the clinical supervisor of all staff psychologists. In addition to his administrative role, he provides long term project supervision and administrative rotation supervision.

Professional: Dr. Carney's professional interests include personality assessment, acceptance and commitment therapy, end-of-life care, traumatic stress, and health psychology. His theoretical orientation is object relations with interpersonal and cognitive-behavioral interventions.

Personal: Favorite avocations include swimming with his children, attending local plays, boogie boarding at Perdido Key, finding new sushi restaurants, and going walking with his wife.

Linda M. Cox, Ph.D.

Title: Supervisory Psychologist/Clinical Coordinator PR RTP

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Iowa State University Counseling Center

License: Mississippi 1998 – Present

Duties: Dr. Cox is the Clinical Coordinator of the 72 bed residential treatment program that addresses Addiction, military related PTSD, Chronic Mental Illness, and homelessness. She programmatically supervises approximately fifty staff from multiple disciplines: Psychology, Social Work, Addictions, Recreational Therapy, Primary Care, Psychiatry, Nursing, Vocational Rehabilitation, Chaplain Services, and Pharmacy.

Professional interests: Dr. Cox's professional interests include mental health administration, leadership development, clinical supervision of developing psychotherapists, and best practices in treatment of co-occurring disorders. Treatment approaches are integrative in nature, incorporating cognitive-behavioral, humanistic-existential, and feminist perspectives.

Personal Interests: Her personal interests include spending time with her husband, adult daughters, and her pets (Blue Heeler Mix dog and a mixed breed cat), grilling out on weekends, and gardening. She also loves music (all types) and reading fiction.

Candace M. Drake, Psy.D.

Title(s): Assistant Director of Intern Training;

PTSD Psychologist

School: University of Indianapolis

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System,

License: Alabama, 2012- present

Duties: As PTSD Psychologist at the Joint Ambulatory Care Center (JACC) in Pensacola, FL, Dr. Drake provides both individual and group psychotherapy for Veterans diagnosed with PTSD. She also participates in interdisciplinary treatment planning both within the general mental health clinic and the PTSD Clinical Team. She serves as Assistant Director of Training to the Pre-Doctoral Internship Training Program.

Professional Interests: Dr. Drake's professional interests include a commitment to training, supervision, and the consultation process. Clinically, she emphasizes the use of evidence-based treatments. She is certified in providing both Prolonged Exposure and Cognitive Processing Therapy and is a VA National PE Consultant. In addition to her duties as ADOT, Dr. Drake serves as the Didactics/Rotation Coordinator for the Internship Training Program as well as EBT Preceptor of the Rural Mental Health Post-Doctoral Training Program.

Personal Interests: Dr. Drake enjoys reading, listening to music, expressive dance (such as the 'Shopping Cart' and 'Sprinkler'), and spending time with family, friends, and boxer dog, Sunshine. She also loves football and frequently dominates in Fantasy Football Leagues.

Shannon K. S. Fussell, Ph.D.

Title(s): Director of Intern Training;
Staff Psychologist

School: Auburn University

Internship: The University Counseling Center –
Florida State University

License: Georgia, 2009 – Present

Duties: In addition to her role in the Predoctoral Internship program, Dr. Fussell's clinical focus is on working with couples and families.

Professional: Dr. Fussell's professional interests include training, supervision, developmental psychology, the therapeutic alliance, and working with couples and families. She enjoys using a variety of evidence-based practices with the relationship at the center of therapeutic interactions.

Personal: Dr. Fussell loves to try new things and almost always enjoys them. She would like to, and at times does, wear flip-flops year round. She enjoys playing classical piano and honky-tonk guitar. She is very proud of her eclectic record collection. She enjoys running, cooking, trying new foods, billiards, and time with family and friends.

Ginger A. Gunn Ph.D.,

Title(s): Psychologist – Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Program with specialty focus in Chronic Mental Illness

School: Seattle Pacific University

Internship: Wyoming State Hospital

License: Mississippi, May 2013 – Present

Duties: Dr. Gunn is a psychologist for the MHRRTTP. Her duties in this role include: completing intake psychological assessment interviews, conducting lecture and process group therapy, working with individual patients and participating on an interdisciplinary treatment team. Group therapy includes groups in Social Skills Training, Illness Management and Recovery, Anger Management, Mood Control and Enhancement, Creative Expressions (art focused group), Think Well/Live Well (health and behavioral medicine group), Healing in Recovery (spirituality/personal enhancement focused group), Journaling, Wellness Recovery Action Plan group. All groups utilize cognitive behavioral or dialectical behavioral techniques.

Professional Interests: Dr. Gunn's professional interests include Recovery Approach to serving clients with Serious Mental Illness, psychotherapeutic treatment for older adults, and personality assessment. Her theoretical orientation is integrative, with an emphasis in interpersonal and cognitive behavioral interventions.

Personal Interests: Her personal interests include hiking, pumping iron, antiques, and traveling and discovering new areas in the Gulf Coast and the US.

Angela P. Hatcher, Ph.D.

Title: Clinical Psychologist – Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MHR RTP)

School: Western Michigan University

Internship: Fulton State Hospital

License: Alabama, 2010 – Present; Michigan, 2010 – Present

Duties: Dr. Hatcher is a psychologist for the MHR RTP. Her duties in this role include: completing intake psychological assessment interviews, suicide risk assessments, and suicide safety plans; conducting lecture and process group therapy; working with individual clients; and participating on an interdisciplinary treatment team. Therapy groups include Relapse Prevention, Introduction to Addictions, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Self-Acceptance, and Motivational Enhancement Therapy. All groups utilize behavioral and cognitive behavioral techniques.

Professional Interests: Dr. Hatcher's professional interests include substance use disorders, offender treatment, forensic assessments, and psychopathy. Her theoretical orientation is behavioral, with a cognitive-behavioral influence.

Personal Interests: Her personal interests include spending time with her family, traveling, spending time on the water, reading, and watching Saints and Alabama football.

Stephen R. Hill, Ph.D.,

Title: Staff Psychologist

School: Florida State University

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System; Erwin L. Shatus award for Outstanding Psychology Resident

License: North Carolina, 2004-present

Duties: Dr. Hill's primary focus is the provision of individual and group psychotherapy for Veterans diagnosed with PTSD, emphasizing evidence-based treatment and techniques as clinically appropriate. Additionally, he conducts psychological evaluation for the purposes of diagnostic clarification and treatment planning at the request of other professionals. He currently serves as Lead Mental Health Coordinator at the Panama City CBOC, and is currently the Chair of the Psychology Professional Standards Board. He also serves as a member on the Peer Review Committee, the Mental Health Access Committee, the Family Advisory Council, and the Psychology Recruitment Team. He provides seminar instruction for objective personality measures through the Assessment Seminar for the Psychology Internship Program.

Professional Interests: Dr. Hill's professional interests include personality assessment, PTSD with Secondary Depression, and moral injury. His orientation is eclectic with an existential and cognitive-behavioral emphasis.

Personal Interests: Avocations include spending time with friends and family, traveling, recreational sports, and spending time outdoors.

Debbie Javorsky, Ph.D.

Title(s): Clinical Neuropsychologist

School: University of Rhode Island

Internship: Boston VA Medical Center

Post-doc: Brown University Clinical Psychology

Training Consortium (Adult Neuropsychology
Specialization)

License: New Hampshire, 2002 – Present

Duties: Dr. Javorsky is a Supervisory Psychologist and a Neuropsychologist here at the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System. She runs the Biloxi Division Neuropsychology Clinic wherein she responds to consults and supervises assessment and integrated report writing for our Internship. In August 2011 she will be the Cognitive and Neuropsychology Seminar facilitator.

Professional: Professional interests include neuropsychology of dementia, PTSD, and TBI (especially mild TBI), and neuropsychological test development. She utilizes a flexible battery approach to neuropsychological evaluations. Her theoretical approach to psychotherapy is cognitive-behavioral.

Personal: Some of Dr. Javorsky's personal interests are knitting, crocheting, making jewelry, spending time with family and friends (which includes spoiling the grandkids), enjoying the sunshine on the Gulf Coast, and keeping fit.

Jeffrey S. Lawley, Ph.D.

Title: Psychologist – Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Program (MHR RTP)

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Michigan State University Counseling Center

License: Louisiana, 2010 – present

Duties: Dr. Lawley is the generalist psychologist for the MHR RTP. The MHR RTP is a residential program that primarily serves Veterans who need more intensive treatment than typical outpatient work, but are not appropriate for a locked inpatient unit. His duties include psychological assessment interviews and testing, individual and group therapy, and working with the MHR RTP treatment team to coordinate mental health treatment. Groups include DBT, mindfulness/meditation, CBT, Seeking Safety, process groups, and a group on mental health treatment. He recently became involved in mental health education for general staff in Behavioral Health. Dr. Lawley recently moved to the VA from a position teaching in a counseling program.

Professional Interests: Professional interests include psychological assessment, supervision, career development, and multicultural psychology. His theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive-behavioral, with heavy interpersonal and narrative influences.

Personal Interests: Personal interests include computers, cars, games, history, and football. A side interest in psychology is early childhood development, as he has a young son. His wife is also a psychologist, and they are patiently waiting for the day when their son realizes this.

Drake Miller, Psy.D., Psychologist – General Mental Health, Peer Support Supervisor

School: Nova Southeastern University

Internship: LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans, 1999

License: Florida, 2001 – Present

Duties: Dr. Miller is a psychologist in the General Mental Health section at the Joint Ambulatory Care Clinic (JACC) in Pensacola. His duties in this role include: completing intake psychological assessment interviews, managing mental health consults from behavioral health and primary care staff, providing individual therapy and participating on an interdisciplinary treatment team. Dr. Miller serves as the clinical supervisor for the Peer Support staff at the JACC.

Professional: Dr. Miller's professional interests include forensic/correctional psychology, psychopathy and the detection of malingering. His theoretical orientation is integrative, with a cognitive-behavioral influence.

Personal: His personal interests include spending time at the beach, snorkeling, traveling, working out, attending Saints football games, dining with family and friends and acting like a kid at rollercoaster and water parks.

Kathleen T. Payne, Ph.D.

Title(s): Psychologist – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Intensive Outpatient Program (PTSD-IOP), EBT & Special Topics Coordinator

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System

License: Alabama, 2011 – Present

Duties: Dr. Payne is the psychologist for the PTSD IOP. Her duties in this role include: completing intake psychological assessment interviews, conducting lecture and process group therapy, working with individual patients and participating on an interdisciplinary treatment team. Group therapy includes groups in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Prolonged Exposure, Anger Management, PTSD Education, Communication Skills Training, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Special Topics, Relaxation and Journaling, Growth Potential and Prolonged Exposure. All groups utilize cognitive behavioral, cognitive processing or dialectical behavioral techniques. Dr. Payne also serves as the Evidence Based Treatments & Special Topics Seminar Coordinator for the internship training program and she teaches objective personality measures for the Assessment seminar.

Professional: Dr. Payne's professional interests include behavioral medicine/health psychology, psychopathy, and psychotherapeutic treatment for older adults. Her theoretical orientation is integrative, with a cognitive-behavioral influence.

Personal: Her personal interests include spending time with her husband and son, traveling, running with her four-legged children (Roxy & Lady), cheering "War Eagle," and playing the piano.

Jefferson O. Rogers, Psy.D.

Title(s): Geropsychologist, Ethics Consultation Coordinator

School: Florida Institute of Technology

Internship: Washington, DC VAMC

Postdoctoral Fellowship: Geropsychology, Little Rock VAMC

License: Mississippi, 1995 – Present

Duties: Dr. Rogers supervises students on the Geropsychology rotation and lectures on geropsychology. Clinical duties include providing psychological services to the Community Living Center, the Dementia Unit, the Transitional Care Unit, and hospice patients. He additionally serves as Chairperson of the Ethics Consultation service of the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care and has been Interim Director of Training. Dr. Rogers was the 2013 recipient of the William A. Nelson Award for Excellence in Health Care Ethics.

Professional: Dr. Rogers' professional interests include geropsychology, neuropsychology, assessment of decisional capacity, tobacco cessation, and health care ethics consultation. His theoretical orientation is eclectic/pragmatic with a cognitive-behavioral emphasis.

Personal: Avocations include regularly performing music at events and haunts across the Coast, cooking, dining, sartorial matters, projects around the house, and indulging his pets, granddaughter, & wife.

Dawn S. Sharpless, Ph.D.

Title: Staff Psychologist, PTSD/SUD

School: Tennessee State University

Internship: James Quillen VA Medical Center

License: Tennessee, 2006 - Present.

Duties: Dr. Sharpless facilitates individual and group outpatient psychotherapy with Veterans who have dual diagnoses of PTSD and substance use disorders. She is certified in Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR) by the EMDR International Association and has completed VA certification in Prolonged Exposure therapy (PE). She leads Seeking Safety and Interpersonal psychotherapy groups. She also provides clinical supervision for Psychology Interns and Postdoctoral Residents.

Professional interests: Dr. Sharpless embraces an integrative theoretical orientation strongly influenced by an interpersonal/psychodynamic perspective. Clinical and research interests include trauma processing, applications of bilateral brain stimulation to psychotherapy, clinical supervision, clinical outcome methodology, women's issues, ethics, and complementary/alternative therapies.

Personal interests: Interests include enjoying local music festivals, hand-building with clay and other artistic pursuits, reading (science fiction, alternative histories), walking on the beach, riding a "geezer" motorcycle with her husband, and spending time with her grandchildren.

Gustave F.P. Sison, Ph.D.

Title(s): Chief, Psychology Service; Coordinator of Research and Development; Administration, Research and Long Term Therapy Supervisor

School: University of Southern Mississippi

Internship: Albany Medical Center/VA Medical Consortium, Albany, New York

License: Mississippi, 1986 – Present

Duties: Dr. Sison is Chief Clinical Psychologist and Employee Assistance Program Coordinator at the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System, where he also coordinates all medical, surgical, and mental health research activities.

Professional: Dr. Sison is a practicing clinical psychologist with over 20 years experience as a clinician, researcher, and behavioral health/change consultant. In addition to heading a consulting firm that specializes in organizational behavioral change, management consulting, stress/conflict management, and outcomes measurement, he teaches a doctoral course in health psychology, and is the author of 18 professional publications in the behavioral sciences.

Personal: Personal interests include canoeing, kayaking, numismatics, and history.

Kimberly Tartt-Godbolt, PsyD.

Title: Supervisory Psychologist – Telemental Health Program

School: Georgia School of Professional Psychology

Internship: The Guidance Center Murfreesboro

Postdoctoral Fellow- Vanderbilt University Medical Center, 2008

License: Tennessee, 2008 – Present

Duties: Dr. Tartt-Godbolt is the supervisory psychologist for the Telemental Health Program. Her duties in this role include: providing leadership, guidance and consultation for Telemental Health Staff and Telemental Health issues for the CBOCs in Mobile, AL; Pensacola, FL; Panama City, FL; and Eglin Air Force Base; as well as the main medical center located in Biloxi, MS. Her role also includes participating on an interdisciplinary treatment team and providing a significant amount of "Video Telecommunications (V-Tel) Psychology", using a variety of evidence-based therapies particularly to support the treatment of PTSD. She also supervises interns on the telemental health rotation.

Professional: Dr. Tartt-Godbolt's professional interests include women's mental health, trauma, diversity issues, and training. Dr. Tartt-Godbolt served and the diversity chair for the executive board of the Tennessee Psychological Association. Research interests include technology and mental health. Her theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive-behavioral. She also has an interest in mental health outreach. She is a member of the Mobile Medical Reserve Corps.

Personal Interests: Her personal interests include spending time with her two year old son and husband, watching movies, and playing the piano. She is enjoying rediscovering her hometown after being away for 16 years and getting spend more time with her extended family as well.

Rebecca A. Temple, Ph.D.

Title: Polytrauma Psychologist

School: Tennessee State University

Internship: Consortium of the Medical College of Georgia/Augusta VA Medical Center, PTSD and Rehabilitation Emphasis

License: Alabama, 2010 – Present

Duties: Dr. Temple is responsible for the provision of a full range of psychological services as a polytrauma psychologist. She provides cognitive, vocational, and adaptive assessments in an interdisciplinary Polytrauma team. She also provides pre-employment law enforcement evaluations for VA police officers. Her clinical interests include PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Rehabilitation.

Professional: Dr. Temple's professional interests include assessment, supervision, the neurobiology of psychopathology, cognitive bases of behavior, providing prolonged exposure to Veterans with combat or sexual assault exposure, and working with law enforcement officers. She enjoys using a variety of evidence-based practices using components of interpersonal and psychodynamic theories. Dr. Temple has completed training requirements for evidence-based therapies in Interpersonal Therapy for Depression (IPT) and Prolonged Exposure (PE) for PTSD. She is also a VA national consultant for PE.

Personal: Her personal interests include exercise, riding around in her old car, shooting, spending time with her husband, and volunteering in the community with foster children and on the Board of Governance for the county library.

W. Brandon Ware, Psy.D.

Title: Clinical Psychologist

School: Regent University

Internship: Mississippi State Hospital

License: Mississippi, 2013 - present

Duties: Dr. Ware provides assessment and treatment services for individuals referred to the PCT PTSD Clinical Team). He utilizes both individual and group-based models of treatment in the provision of psychotherapy services, incorporating a combination of CBT and acceptance-based principles in his individual and group treatment. Dr. Ware also provides supervision for psychology interns and participates in interdisciplinary screening team meetings and annual clinical team meetings.

Professional Interests: Dr. Ware approaches psychotherapy and theory from a predominately behavioral perspective with an emphasis on second (e.g. CBT) and third wave (e.g. ACT) approaches. Clinical and research interests include mindfulness and acceptance, compassion, resilience, hope, transdiagnostic conceptualization and treatment, and biobehavioral assessment and treatment (i.e. biofeedback and neuroimaging).

Personal Interests: Dr. Ware enjoys old man activities that include going to the symphony, spending a relaxing evening at the beach, spending a relaxing evening at home, spending a relaxing few hours at the casino, spending a relaxing [insert random event here]. He also enjoys the generic activities of listening to a broad array of contrasting music styles, watching the same movies over and over again while doing something else, going to try new food at restaurants-only to get the same thing again, etc.

Lisa M. Wurst, Ph.D.

Title: Clinical Psychologist

School: Palo Alto University

Internship: Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB

License: Kansas 2013 – present; Mississippi 2013 - present

Duties: Dr. Wurst is the pain management behavioral specialist for Behavioral Medicine Services within the medical center. Her duties include comprehensive assessment of chronic pain patients, individual and group treatment with a health psychology focus, interdisciplinary team work, and significantly contributing to the development of an innovative and integrated pain clinic at the Biloxi VA.

Professional interests: Dr. Wurst's professional interests include behavioral medicine/health psychology, neuropsychology, and sports psychology. Her theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive-behavioral with an emphasis on comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment and treatment.

Personal interests: Her personal interests include quality time with family and friends, running the Ocean Springs Bridge and charity races throughout the Gulf Coast, taking the boat to Destin, and annual trips back home to California.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Eligibility

Applicants for the internship program must be degree candidates in APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology who have fulfilled departmental requirements for residency/internship as certified by their university training director. Only US citizens are eligible to receive stipend support. A physical exam certifying good health is required of applicants who are selected for the internship program at the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System. A security background check is also required.

Stipend and Benefits

VA Headquarters in Washington, DC notifies us in January of each year of the budget that we will receive for the following internship year. The 2014-2015 stipend was \$23,974 per year. There are ten federal holidays, and interns accrue an additional 26 days of leave during the year. Additionally, interns are granted authorized absence for dissertation related activities and approved educational programs. Interns are eligible for optional Government Life and Health Insurance benefits.

Applying

Application materials (AAPI) are located on the [APPIC web site](#). **The application deadline is at midnight CST, November 5, 2014.** We will receive your completed application when you select us as one of the sites for which you are applying. Our training program faculty will review your application via the Selection Portal of the APPIC site mentioned above. Applicants will be notified no later than December 12, 2014 as to whether or not they have been invited to interview. Interviews are given in person on an invitation-only basis and are required for those who are seriously interested in our program. Interviews are typically conducted during the months of December and January. Telephone interviews are typically not conducted.

Recommendations

We require letters of recommendation from at least four (4) supervisors who are familiar with your academic and applied performance in psychology. Two of these letters should be from individuals familiar with your academic work and two from individuals familiar with your applied work (e.g., practicum placements). "Letters of Readiness" from a program's Director of Training cannot be one of these letters of recommendation.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA) ACCREDITATION

The Psychology Internship Training Program at the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) and has been since 1980. Contact APA at: 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242. Phone: (202) 336-5979. Visit the APA web site at: *
<http://www.apa.org/>.

ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOLOGY POSTDOCTORAL AND INTERNSHIP CENTERS (APPIC) MEMBERSHIP

The Psychology Internship Training Program at the Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and fully subscribes to their selection procedures and policies. This site agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept or use any ranking-related information from any intern applicant. Please visit the

APPIC web site to obtain additional information including the Uniform Application and Match Rules
(*<http://www.appic.org/>).
APPIC Match Number: 140111

CORRESPONDENCE

Send requests for information to:
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